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76,917 M. 1908.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD.

Whitchall, S.W.,

1 1th August, 1908

Sir,

I am directed by the Local Government Board to state that they have had under their consideration the "Observations" of Dr Hope, Medical Officer of Health for the City of Liverpool, upon the Report issued in March last of their Inspector, Dr Beece, on "Smallpox and Smallpox Hospitals in Liverpool", and also Dr Hope's previous report on Smallpox in Liverpool, dated 31st December, 1903.

I am to point out that, for the purposes of public health administration, the important question is whether or not the use of certain hospitals for acute cases of smallpox during the epidemic in Liverpool was attended by a disproportionate prevalence of the disease among persons dwelling in the neighbourhood of those hospitals at the time when cases of smallpox were under treatment there. Until Dr Beece's elaborate and detailed enquiry was made in 1904 this question could not be answered. His Report has, however, now made available a very important series of facts on this subject, the accuracy of which is not disputed.

The incidence of smallpox on dwellings in the neighbourhood of each of the three hospitals in question has been shown by Dr Beece's report to have been disproportionately great, the disproportion being specially evident in the case of inhabited areas which are nearer to the hospitals. In each instance, this disproportionate incidence has been manifested during the period in which the hospital was receiving acute smallpox cases.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD.

Wm. H. H. W. W.

1 1st August, 1908

Sir,

I am directed by the Local Government Board to state that they have had under their consideration the "Observations" of Dr. Hope, Medical Officer of Health for the City of Liverpool, upon the Report issued in March last of the Inspector, Dr. Reese, on "Smallpox and Scabies in Hospitals in Liverpool", and also Dr. Hope's previous report on Smallpox in Liverpool, dated 21st December, 1905. I am to point out that, for the purpose of public health administration, the important question is whether or not the use of certain hospitals for acute cases of smallpox during the epidemic in Liverpool was attended by a disproportionate prevalence of the disease among persons dwelling in the neighbourhood of those hospitals at the time when cases of smallpox were under treatment there. Until Dr. Reese's elaborate and detailed enquiry was made in 1904 this question could not be answered. His Report has, however, now made available a very important series of facts on this subject, the accuracy of which is not disputed. The incidence of smallpox on dwellings in the neighbourhood of each of the three hospitals in question has been shown by Dr. Reese's report to have been disproportionately great, the disproportion being especially evident in the case of inhabited areas which are nearer to the hospitals. In each instance, this disproportionate incidence has been manifested during the period in which the hospital was receiving acute smallpox cases.

In the case of the Parkhill Hospital- a large building opened at the height of the epidemic, and receiving numerous acute cases of smallpox- there was a considerable number of dwellings between $\frac{1}{2}$ mile and 1 mile from the hospital. The disproportion referred to was in this case a matter of large figures, and involved a great number of cases; so that a notable proportion of the persons attacked during the epidemic were persons who dwelt near this hospital.

On the other hand, the case of Fazakerley Hospital, the figures as Dr Reese has repeatedly stated, are small owing to the comparative fewness of the dwellings in the vicinity of the hospital. The persons living near the hospital who contracted smallpox formed an almost insignificant proportion of the total number of cases which occurred during the epidemic. Nevertheless this population suffered in its degree; the rate of invasion of dwellings in the sparsely populated area around the Fazakerley Hospital was considerably higher than that in the rest of Liverpool at the time when this hospital alone was used for the reception of smallpox cases.

I am to state that, in the Board's experience, the disproportionate incidence of smallpox on the populous areas in the neighbourhood of a hospital receiving many acute cases of smallpox is not a matter which need occasion surprise.

The Board would draw attention to the references given in Dr Reese's report to other instances in which similar occurrences have been ascertained and reported.

For the information of the Town Council I am to forward herewith a copy of an extract from the Annual Report for 1886 of the Medical Officer of the Board, on the "Distribution of Smallpox in the Metropolis" which indicates the experiences of London in regard to the effect of smallpox hospitals on the local prevalence of

In the case of the Portland Hospital - a large building opened at the height of the epidemic, and receiving numerous acute cases of smallpox - there was a considerable number of deaths between 5 and 10 days from the hospital. The disproportionate referred to was in this case a matter of large figures, and involved a great number of cases; so that a notable proportion of the persons attacked during the epidemic were persons who died near this hospital.

On the other hand, the case of Fenchurch Hospital, the figures as Mr. Bead has repeatedly stated, are small owing to the comparative smallness of the building in the vicinity of the hospital. The persons living near the hospital who contracted smallpox formed an almost insignificant proportion of the total number of cases which occurred during the epidemic. Nevertheless this population entered in its danger; the rate of infection of dwellings in the densely populated area around the Fenchurch Hospital was considerably higher than that in the rest of Liverpool at the time when this hospital alone was used for the reception of smallpox cases.

I am to state that, in the Board's experience, the disproportionate incidence of smallpox on the populous areas in the neighbourhood of a hospital receiving many acute cases of smallpox is not a matter which need occasion surprise.

The Board would draw attention to the testimony given in Mr. Bead's report to other instances in which similar occurrences have been ascertained and reported.

For the information of the Town Council I am to forward herewith a copy of an extract from the Annual Report for 1885 of the Medical Officer of the Board, on the "Distribution of Smallpox in the Metropolis" which indicates the experience of London in regard to the effect of smallpox hospitals on the local prevalence of

the disease before the Metropolitan Asylum Board closed all their London establishments for smallpox.

In view of the experience of London, and of various hospitals in the provinces, together with the facts brought out by Dr Reece's enquiry with regard to the Liverpool Epidemic of 1902-3, it appears to the Board that the excess of incidence of smallpox in the neighbourhood of the several Liverpool hospitals must be attributed wholly, or in great part, to the influence of these hospitals. This conclusion is not affected by statements, such as those made in Dr Hope's "Observations", of the fact that some persons who lived near the hospitals obviously contracted smallpox as a result of direct personal infection; or by the circumstance that a particular area can be found in Liverpool, viz: in the quarter-mile circle drawn round the Hetherfield Road Hospital, in which the incidence of smallpox was exceptionally great, although that area was not in proximity to any of the smallpox hospitals.

In compliance with the request made in your letter of the 27th June, the Board direct me to forward to you the enclosed copy of a Memorandum by Dr Reece on the "Observations" of Dr Hope.

I am to add that the Board cannot but regard Dr Hope's "Observations" as unfortunate in tone, and it does not appear to them that any practical purpose would be served by discussing Dr Reece's report or Dr Hope's reply at a conference at this Office.

If, however, the Town Council desire the Board's advice on the important practical question of procedure in relation to the use of hospitals for smallpox in future epidemic periods, the Board would give careful attention to any considerations which may be submitted to them in relation to that subject, and if necessary, they would be

the disease before the Metropolitan Asylums Board closed all their London establishments for smallpox.

In view of the experience of London, and of various hospitals in the provinces, together with the facts brought out by Dr. Hodge's enquiry with regard to the Liverpool Hospital of 1892-3, it appears to the Board that the excess of incidence of smallpox in the neighbourhood of the several Liverpool hospitals must be attributed mainly, or in great part, to the influence of these hospitals. This conclusion is not affected by statements, such as those made in Dr. Hodge's "Observations", of the fact that some persons who lived near the hospitals obviously contracted smallpox as a result of direct personal infection; or by the circumstances that a particular area can be found in Liverpool, viz: in the quarter-mile circle drawn round the Matherfield Road Hospital, in which the incidence of smallpox was exceptionally great, although that area was not in proximity to any of the smallpox hospitals.

In compliance with the request made in your letter of the 27th June, the Board direct me to forward to you the enclosed copy of a Memorandum by Dr. Hodge on the "Observations" of Dr. Hodge.

I am to add that the Board cannot but regret that Dr. Hodge's "Observations" are withdrawn in form, and it does not appear to them that any practical purpose would be served by discussing Dr. Hodge's report or Dr. Hodge's reply at a conference at this Office.

It, however, the Town Council desire the Board's advice on the important practical question of procedure in relation to the use of hospitals for smallpox in future and epidemic periods, the Board would give careful attention to any considerations which may be submitted to them in relation to that subject, and if necessary, they would be

Municipal Offices,

Liverpool.

August 1903
 prepared to arrange a date for a conference thereon.

I am, Sir,

Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

I am desired to thank you for your letter of 11th August, together with the Report of W.E. KNOLLYS, and the copy of an Extract from an Annual Report of 1898, all of which my Committee have had before them, and Assistant Secretary. consideration has been given.

I am directed to inform you that my Committee share the views of the Board that a meeting for the purpose of discussing with the Board the points of difference in the Reports of Dr Reese and of the Medical Officer of Health of the City, would serve no useful purpose.

My Committee do not desire to enter upon the controversial aspects of the question, but they would respectfully point out that while the correctness of the reports prepared by their Medical Officer and by Dr Reese are in no way called into question, yet these reports are

The Town Clerk, meet the Hospitals in any way with the incidence of smallpox. The Board will note that Dr Reese's figures do not show the gradual incidence alluded to in the third paragraph of their letter, although, as the Board mention, the incidence of smallpox in dwellings in the neighbourhood of some of the Hospitals was as disproportionately great as it was in other centres entirely unconnected with smallpox hospital administration, for example, the Rathfield Road Hospital, the outbreak having been widely diffused over the whole of the City. The Board will also have noted that, in the case of Parkhill Hospital, to which they specially refer, smallpox had broken out in the

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Municipal Offices,

Liverpool,

August, 1906.

Sir,

I am desired to thank you for your letter of 11th August, together with the Report of Dr Reece, and the copy of an Extract from an Annual Report of 1886, all of which my Committee have had before them, and to which careful consideration has been given.

I am directed to inform you that my Committee share the Views of the Board that a meeting for the purpose of discussing with the Board the points of difference in the Reports of Dr Reece and of the Medical Officer of Health of the City, would serve no useful purpose.

My Committee do not desire to enter upon the controversial aspects of the question, but they would respectfully point out that while the correctness of the maps prepared by their Medical Officer and by Dr Reece are in no way called into question, yet these maps alone are insufficient to connect the Hospitals in any way with the incidence of smallpox. The Board will note that Dr Reece's figures do not show the graduated incidence alluded to in the third paragraph of their letter, although, as the Board mention, the incidence of smallpox on dwellings in the neighbourhood of some of the Hospitals was as disproportionately great as it was in other centres entirely unconnected with smallpox hospital administration, for example, the Netherfield Road Hospital, the outbreak having been widely diffused over the whole of the City. The Board will also have noted that, in the case of Parkhill Hospital, to which they specially refer, smallpox had broken out in the

Sanitary Officer,

Liverpool,

August, 1908.

Sir,

I am pleased to thank you for your letter of 11th

August, together with the Report of Dr. Hesse, and the copy of

an Extract from an Annual Report of 1888, all of which my

Committee have had before them, and to which careful

consideration has been given.

I am directed to inform you that my Committee share the

Views of the Board that a meeting for the purpose of

discussing with the Board the points of difference in the

Reports of Dr. Hesse and of the Medical Officer of Health of

the City, would serve no useful purpose.

My Committee do not desire to enter upon the con-

troversial aspects of the question, but they would respect-

fully point out that while the correctness of the maps

prepared by their Medical Officer and by Dr. Hesse are in no

way called into question, yet these maps alone are

insufficient to connect the Hospital in any way with the

incidence of smallpox. The Board will note that Dr. Hesse's

figures do not show the graduated incidence alluded to in the

third paragraph of their letter, although, as the Board

mention, the incidence of smallpox on dwellings in the

neighbourhood of some of the Hospitals was as disproportionate

as it was in other centres entirely unconnected

with smallpox hospital administration, for example, the

Nottingham Road Hospital, the outbreak having been widely

diffused over the whole of the City. The Board will also

have noted that, in the case of Parkhill Hospital, to which

they specially refer, smallpox had broken out in the

vicinity, not once, but repeatedly, before the Hospital was opened for smallpox. My Committee cannot connect in any way these outbreaks with aerial convection from the Hospital.

My Committee also desire to call the attention of the Board to the diagram forwarded to them showing that the few cases of smallpox which did arise within a mile of Fitzakerley Hospital did not occur at a time when the Hospital was at its maximum use, but on the contrary when it was nearly empty.

The Committee note with satisfaction that the construction which had been placed upon the section of Dr Reece's report relating to administration, and to the supervision of the Hospitals, did not correctly interpret the views he desired to convey, and they are satisfied that no hostile reflection was intended to be made by him. My Committee, however, consider it unfortunate that Dr Reece's report was couched in such terms as to admit of such a misconception being placed upon it.

No doubt his Report was, as he states, intended for persons familiar with statistical methods, but wide gratuitous circulations was given to it, and it was placed upon sale; indeed, the presumably expert reviewer of the "Lancet" drew the same inferences as my Committee did.

The Board will need no assurance that the whole action of the Port Sanitary & Hospitals Committee is taken in the interests of the health of the City, and every other consideration is subordinated to that one. Having expended large and substantial sums with the object of making adequate provision for smallpox, and with the fullest official assurances that the site was one against which nothing could be said, they are satisfied to know that the Local Government Board share this view.

My Committee desire me to thank the Board for their willingness to arrange a date for a Conference upon any important practical question arising in connection with the Smallpox Hospitals, and should occasion arise they will gladly avail themselves of the opportunity offered.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

Town Clerk.

The Secretary,

Local Government Board,

Whitehall,

LONDON. S.W.
